

Arlington boasts new state champion trees

*By Matt Bernfeld
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Arlington National Cemetery's Empress and Yellowwood trees in sections 46 and 23 respectively, now stand alone as individual state champions. Each tree was previously a co-champion, sharing the distinction with another Empress and Yellowwood tree in the state. Along with its Pin Oak in section 35, Arlington now has three state champion trees.

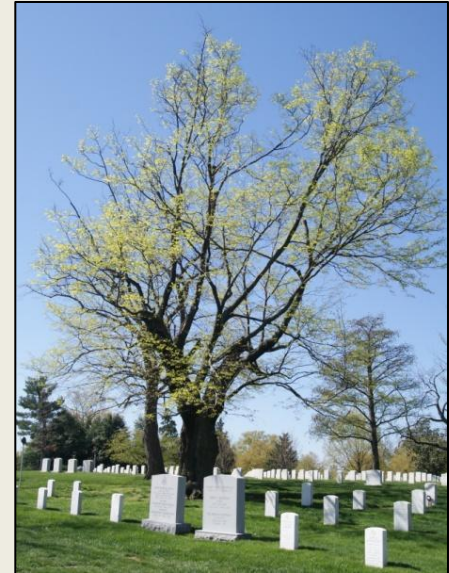
To be named the official state champion, the Virginia Big Tree Program must deem it to be the largest of that species. Steve Van Hoven, urban forester, explained that the program uses a point system that adds up the tree's circumference in inches, its height in feet, and average crown spread in feet. The tree with the highest number of points is given the honor.



Arlington's state champion Empress tree.

"I'm not aware of any other single property equal to the size of Arlington that has three state champion trees on its grounds – this adds another special and historic feature to the cemetery," said Van Hoven.

The Empress tree has a circumference of 214 inches, is 61 feet high and has an average crown spread of 65 feet. The Yellowwood has a circumference of 153 inches, is 48 feet high and has an average crown spread of 53 feet.



Arlington's state champion Yellowwood tree.
Photos by Melissa Bohan